

Remarks:

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1-6 and 8-14 remain in the application. Claims 1 and 8-11 have been amended. Claim 7 has been cancelled.

In the second paragraph on page 2 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 1, 2, 5 and 6 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Letavic et al. (US Pat. No. 6,221,737) together with Assaderaghi et al. (US Pat. No. 6,121,661) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). In the last paragraph on page 3 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 1, 2, and 4 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Merchant (US Pat. No. 5,648,671) together with Assaderaghi et al. under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

The rejections have been noted and claim 1 has been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application. More specifically, the feature of claim 7 has been added to claim 1.

Since claim 7 contains allowable subject matter as indicated by the Examiner in the sixth paragraph on page 5 of the Office action, claim 1 is now believed to be allowable. Since claims

2 and 4-6 are dependent on claim 1, they are believed to be allowable as well.

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's statement from the fifth paragraph on page 5 to the fourth paragraph on page 6 of the above-mentioned Office action that claims 3 and 7-14 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The feature of claim 7 has been added to claim 1 as discussed above. Since claims 3 and 8-14 are dependent on allowable claim 1, they are believed to be allowable in dependent form.

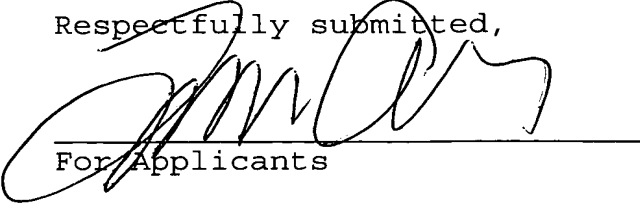
In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-6 and 8-14 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out. In the alternative, the entry of the amendment is requested as it is believed to place the application in better condition for appeal, without requiring extension of the field of search.

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made. Please charge any fees which

might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the
Deposit Account of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,



For Applicants

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